

Press Release

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BAGHDAD, IRAQ

FIRST BATTALION OF NEW IRAQI ARMY GRADUATES *Will Work Along Side Coalition Forces to Protect Their Nation*

Kirkush, Iraq...October 4, 2003— The Iraqi Theme, once banned by the regime of Saddam Hussein, filled the air as a new era for the Iraqi Army dawned in Kirkush this morning. Today, the first battalion of the New Iraqi Army graduated from basic training.

More than 700 proud new Iraqi troops marched onto the parade ground of the Kirkush Military Training Base to be congratulated by the Iraqi Governing Council and the Coalition for their dedication to a new, free Iraq. The battalion began their 9 week training course on August 2, 2003. During their time in Kirkush, the trainees were instructed in a variety of subjects from the laws of war and codes of conduct to first aid and marksmanship.

“Gone is the brutality of the old regime,” said CPA Administrator L. Paul Bremer. “The New Iraqi Army will be responsible to its citizens and will serve to protect Iraq from external threats.”

In addition to Governing Council President Dr. Ayad Allawi, Bremer and other dignitaries, the graduates were also joined by the more than 1000 new recruits who will comprise the next battalion to be trained. The second battalion will begin training exercises tomorrow. More than 3000 Iraqis have been recruited to become part of the army beyond today’s graduating battalion.

During training, recruits received a minimum of \$60.00 per month salary. Upon promotion to Private First Class, the soldier’s pay will increase to \$ 70.00 per month. Officer cadets will receive \$100.00 a month while undergoing training. Every soldier and officer will receive annual performance increases.

The first battalion will become part of the U.S. 4th Infantry Division and work along side Coalition forces to protect Iraq’s borders. A number of graduates will remain at the training base to become instructors for future battalions of the Iraqi Army. They will continue to receive advanced training focused on their specific mission, once assigned.

The Coalition is working to produce three trained divisions over the next two years. These roughly 40,000 troops will form the foundation of a strong national defense force, with a proud new tradition of service that is admired by free Iraqis.